

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A storage phosphor reader, comprising:
  - a receiving station adapted to receive a cassette containing a removable storage phosphor;
  - a path along which the storage phosphor is transportable in a first and second direction when removed from and returned to the cassette, the receiving station being disposed at one end of the path; ~~and~~
  - an access area disposed at the other end of the path wherein the access area can be exposed to ambient light as the storage phosphor is transported along the path; and
  - an erase area, spaced from the access area, disposed along the path intermediate the receiving station and the access area.
  
2. (Currently Amended) A storage phosphor reader, comprising:
  - a receiving station adapted to receive a cassette containing a removable storage phosphor;
  - a path along which the storage phosphor is transportable in a first and second direction when removed from and returned to the cassette, the receiving station being disposed at one end of the path;
  - an access area disposed at the other end of the path wherein the access area ~~can be exposed to~~ is exposable to the ambient environment in which the reader is disposed ~~light~~ as the storage phosphor is transported along the path;
  - an erase area, separate from the access area, disposed along the path intermediate the receiving station and the access area; and
  - a removable cover disposed in the access area.

3. (Currently Amended) A storage phosphor reader,  
comprising:

a housing:

a receiving station disposed on one side of the housing adapted to  
receive a cassette containing a removable storage phosphor;

a path disposed within the housing along which the storage  
phosphor is transportable in a first and second direction when removed from and  
returned to the cassette, the receiving station being disposed at one end of the  
path;

an access area disposed on another side of the housing at the other  
end of the path wherein the access area can be exposed to the ambient light  
environment as the storage phosphor is transported along the path;

an erase area, separate from the access area, disposed along the  
path intermediate the receiving station and access area; and

a detachable cover disposed in the access area.